

To: Chairperson and Authority Members

Date: February 19, 2003

From: Mehdi Morshed, Executive Director

Subject: **Agenda Item 5 — Senate Bill 91**

Discussion

Senator Florez brought Senate Bill 91 (SB91) to your attention in San Francisco and you requested the staff to present an analysis of the bill for your consideration.

SB91 was introduced by Senator Florez on January 28, 2003 and has been referred to the Senate Transportation Committee. As of this date, no hearing has been scheduled. A copy of the bill is attached for your information.

SB91, effective January 1, 2004 would transfer all of the duties and responsibilities of Caltrans relative to intercity rail passenger service to the High-Speed Rail Authority. The bill would also require the Authority to conduct a review of all programmed intercity rail projects that have not received an allocation of state funds as of that date and to only proceed with the implementation of projects that are determined by the Authority to be complementary to the planned high-speed rail service.

The author indicated that he is pursuing the bill for the purpose of bringing a better coordination between high-speed train and conventional intercity train service. Caltrans currently administers the capital and operating programs for intercity rail services that are funded by the State. The services are operated by Amtrak under a contractual agreement with Caltrans.

The Authority has been coordinating its planning activities with Caltrans and is currently conducting a joint study of the LOSSAN corridor under a cooperative agreement.

The Authority's activities center around a high-speed train system with a single objective of building the system. Caltrans activities are related to the conventional train service and are primarily administrative in nature. If the Authority were to take over those activities, the Authority would be responsible for the day-to-day operation of those trains as well as planning and building the new high-speed rail system. This arrangement may result in better coordination of those activities, but will detract the Authority from the single purpose of building the new system.

At this time we do not have sufficient details on this proposal, and given the potential detractions from the primary objective of building a high-speed train network, the Board may be better served by postponing any action on SB91.